



## STORMWATER WORK GROUP

Wednesday, September 16, 2015, from 9:05 am to 12:00 pm  
USGS, 934 Broadway, Tacoma WA, 98402

# Revised Summary

OF THE MEETING'S KEY DISCUSSIONS, DECISIONS AND AGREEMENTS

*a list of acronyms is provided at the end of the document*

### ATTENDEES:

*Work Group members and alternates present, and the organizations and caucuses they represent:*

**Cami Apfelbeck** (Bainbridge Island), Local Governments, and the Work Group's Chair; **Jess Archer** (Ecology), State Agencies; **Abby Barnes** (WDNR), State Agencies, and the Work Group's Vice Chair; **Jenee Colton** (King Co), Local Governments; **Dana de Leon** (Tacoma), Local Governments; **Leska Fore** (PSP), State Agencies; **Dick Gersib** (WSDOT), State Agencies; **Shana Joy** (WSCC), Agriculture; **Jennifer Lanksbury** (WDFW), State Agencies; **Ben Parrish** (Covington), Local Governments; **Andy Rheume** (Redmond), Local Governments; **Jim Simmonds** (King Co), Local Governments.

*Others in attendance:* **Fred Bergdolt** (WSDOT), **Curtis DeGasperi** (King Co), **Angela Gallardo** (Newcastle), **Sarah Norbers** (Tacoma), **Callie Ridolfi** (Ridolfi Environmental).

*Work Group staff:* **Karen Dinicola** (Ecology), SWG Staff; **Brandi Lubliner** (Ecology), RSMP Coordinator.

### WORK GROUP DISCUSSES PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING NEXT ROUND OF RSMP EFFECTIVENESS STUDIES

The SWG's Effectiveness Subgroup discussed what applicants and participants liked and did not like about the last RSMP Effectiveness Studies selection round. They developed a proposal (included at the end of this meeting summary) that is more streamlined, aims to support well-informed permittee voting, and includes technical review in advance of a workshop.

The subgroup also proposed that, since the SWG will only have one or two rounds of study selection each permit cycle, we have a process to consider requests from other grant funding programs to leverage RSMP funds. The subgroup agreed these proposals should come directly to the SWG. There was not agreement among the work group members about this idea. So we will not consider funding any RSMP project outside our own process now but will revisit the concept later. We might invite other grant program representatives to one of our meetings early in their evaluation process.

### WORK GROUP UPDATED ON REDMOND'S PAIRED URBAN WATERSHED RETROFIT STUDY

Andy Rheume gave work group members an overview of the RSMP Effectiveness Study. His presentation will be posted with this meeting summary at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/mtgsummaries.html>. Redmond is trying to restore priority creeks by a combination of retrofits, instream restoration projects, and active stormwater management. Long term monitoring of this type of project has not been undertaken before. The first phase of this study produced a [literature review](#), final study design (soon to be [posted](#)), and draft QAPP to guide the long term monitoring. Contracting is underway to begin collecting the baseline data prior to project construction. Other creeks are included in the study to provide control (no retrofit projects) and reference (forest) conditions. The study will focus on hydrologic indicators such as pulse count measures; water quality grab samples during 14 storms per year; and habitat and stream benthos sampling during the summers. The goal is to have statistical strength to identify a trend in 5 years, and work group members expressed support to see the study through the full ten years of monitoring as originally envisioned. The RSMP is the only program with enough flexibility to fund important long-term projects of this nature.

### WORK GROUP UPDATED ON RSMP COORDINATION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND OVERSIGHT

The PRO- Committee last met August 6 and will next meet October 15. Brandi Lubliner reported that multi-agency teams for both the streams data analysis and the marine nearshore sediment study are close to completing draft scopes of work and budgets. The PRO-C will review these at its next meeting, as well as SOWs for 1-2 more effectiveness studies.

Small streams status and trends: By the time the index period ends, summer habitat and benthos monitoring will likely have been conducted at between 80-90 RSMP streams sites. At our last meeting the subcommittee proposed how to approach analysis of this huge data set to address the priority questions:

- Status questions: what percent of streams inside and outside UGAs meet water quality criteria? What are the natural and human variables that correlate with the findings?
- Trends questions: what parameters, frequency, and timing should be carried forward for future rounds of monitoring to support trends analyses? Part of this will focus on hydrology.
- Comparison questions: how do RSMP findings compare to other probabilistic designs (particularly ambient and reference sites), and to targeted programs? Part of this will be analyzing the opt-out permittees' data separately and comparing those locally intensified findings to the overall RSMP findings. (Note that Pierce County also analyzed samples for personal care products and hormones.)

The total budget for streams analysis is about ~\$225K with EAP, King Co, USGS, and PSP participating. This effort is envisioned to result in a series of reports rather than a single large report.

Marine nearshore status and trends: USGS is leading the marine nearshore sediment sampling with WDNR, MEL, and King Co involved in the project in sampling, analysis, and review roles. WDFW is leading the mussel sampling and so far has identified 14 additional sites to be sponsored by other funding agencies. The initial proposed site lists for the two efforts are the same but the final site lists will reflect the differences in the programs' needs and goals.

Brandi has talked with Peter Ross at the Vancouver Aquarium about plans to conduct extensive mussels and sediment sampling along the coast of British Columbia and opportunities to coordinate analyses and share results. Their sites are opportunistic, determined by funding available by sponsors.

Oversight and capacity: The PRO-C also began to discuss when, how – and by whom – to conduct their assigned review of Ecology's performance in the role of RSMP Administrator. The review will focus on Ecology's serving the needs and intent of the stakeholders involved in the program and lessons learned.

Ecology tracked some additional RSMP costs for the prior fiscal year. A further simple work load analysis is needed. None of Karen's time helping Brandi launch and manage RSMP projects has been charged to the RSMP. Part of Brandi's work load has been project management for streams status and trends which is no longer charged to administration. The PRO-C will discuss whether to include Ecology's increased overhead costs in the contingency budget for this RSMP round, how much additional capacity beyond Brandi's 80% FTE is needed for the remainder of this round and future rounds, and what would be the value of adding more capacity to manage contracts.

## **SWG COMMUNICATION SUBGROUP TO RECONVENE AND DEVELOP A NEW COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Each RSMP project should include communication of key milestones as well as a final task to synthesize the findings into a product that can be used for communication with non-scientific audiences. This is being built into the next round of effectiveness studies contracts. It is also being included into the current marine nearshore planning and has been addressed somewhat in the SOW for the streams data analysis.

The SWG's Communication Subgroup includes PIOs of the Associations of Cities and Counties, USGS, Ecology, and some local government liaisons to their councils. This group will develop update the SWG's communication strategy which was last written to inform folks about the creation of the RSMP and its implementation through the permits. Now we need a strategy for sharing the RSMP findings with permit managers and public works directors to ensure that the findings are used to improve permittees' Stormwater Management Programs.

SWG members are encouraged to join the subgroup. Please contact [Karen Dinicola](#) to be added to the email list.

## **AGRICULTURAL RUNOFF MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING UNDERWAY**

Shana Joy of WSCC updated the work group on the SWG Agricultural Runoff Subgroup's efforts since our last meeting. They are reviewing prior recommendations and pulling together information on recent work and possible funding sources. The subgroup should be ready to present implementation recommendations in January. Work group members are encouraged to contact [Shana](#) if interested in participating in or receiving emails related to the subgroup.

## **WORK PLAN UPDATING WILL BEGIN SOON**

The SWG has a biennial work plan that we update annually. Karen will send out specific information to our subgroup chairs between now and our next meeting so that we can discuss proposed updates in November and approve the updated work plan in January.

## **WORK GROUP MEMBERS SHARE IDEAS FOR FUTURE NPDES MUNICIPAL STORMWATER PERMIT MONITORING**

At our last meeting we asked our caucuses and subgroups to begin considering possible improvements to the permit structure for implementing the RSMP which is implemented via Special Condition S8 Monitoring and Assessment of the municipal stormwater NPDES permits: S8.B is status and trends, S8.C is effectiveness studies, and S8.D is SIDIR. The SWG will continue to discuss this at each of the next three meetings in November, January, and March at which point we will finalize any recommendations we have for modifying the permit implementation structure.

Jim Simmonds leads the SWG's local government caucus. He reported that ~15 permittees' initial discussions of this topic last week included the following ideas:

- Status and trends monitoring: continue this program, but consider giving credit for local monitoring programs and including their sites. Consider other opt-out approaches. (One local representative suggested that the SWG reiterate the recommendation not to allow opting out.) Increase the streamflow monitoring effort. Integrate these programs more with federal and state monitoring programs.
- Effectiveness studies: strengthen the feedback loop to permit elements. Consider reducing this pool of funding if the capacity or interest to get projects going is not sufficient.
- SIDIR: consider redirecting these funds.
- Overall: maintain or reduce the current level of effort. Consider other approaches to pay-in structure. Consider compensating permittees for staff participation in RSMP. Request authority to continue RSMP work in the event of a future legislative failure to pass a state budget.

Other local caucus representatives stated that there was a lack of understanding of the RSMP among permittees. Better communication is needed. If the state and federal caucuses would tally up their contributions to the RSMP that might also help permittees understand the collaboration taking place.

Jay Davis leads the SWG's federal agency caucus and Abby Barnes leads the SWG's state agency caucus. The federal caucus did not meet. Abby reported that the state caucus met to regroup and get up to speed. The state caucus is also developing a statement of purpose to recruit members. Between today's meeting and our November SWG meeting both the federal and state caucuses will discuss ideas shared today along with recommendations coming out of the Lower Columbia Habitat Status and Trends Monitoring implementation planning.

Several work group members underscored the need to be patient – to finish collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data for this first round of RSMP projects – before making major changes to the structure which is working well overall. The RSMP can continue to be adapted outside of the permits through future SWG recommendations.

## **TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT SWG REPORTER**

The last "SWG Reporter" went out in July 2015. These brief updates on the RSMP and other SWG efforts are posted at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/reporter.html>. The next issue will go out in the next few weeks.

Topics to be included are:

- Stream sediment chemistry and watershed health monitoring conducted at \_\_ sites this summer,
- Paired urban watershed study will track changes in stream health following retrofits,
- Process underway to identify a second round of RSMP effectiveness studies,
- Marine nearshore sediment monitoring will be conducted next summer,
- IDDE data compilation and evaluation underway ,
- Next RSMP quarterly report is due out in late October, and
- Join our effort!

## **WORK GROUP WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS**

Dana de Leon has been named as an official representative of the SWG's local government caucus and Jennifer Lanksbury has been named as an official representative of the SWG's state agency caucus. Tawni Dalzel has been named as an official alternate for the SWG's local caucus representatives. Heather Kibbey, a founding SWG member and local caucus representative, retired this past summer.

## **AGENDA ITEM NOT DISCUSSED: UPDATES FROM PSEMP**

## **FUTURE MEETING DATES AND PROPOSED DISCUSSION TOPICS**

At all of our meetings, we will:

- Hear feedback from the RSMP Coordinator and PRO-Committee on RSMP implementation,
- Hear from our subgroups about the status of implementing our current work plan,
- Hear from the PSEMP Steering Committee and other PSEMP workgroups, and
- Determine messages and timing for the next SWG Reporter issue.

At our next meeting on Wednesday, November 18, 2015 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the USGS Office in Tacoma, we will also:

- Discuss and approve the Effectiveness Subgroup's finalized project review/ranking strategy,
- Discuss the Communication Subgroup's progress on a new Communication Strategy,
- Continue to discuss recommendations for permit condition S8 Monitoring and Assessment, and
- Discuss annual updates to our Work Plan, including in particular:
  - Selection of a second round of RSMP Effectiveness Studies,
  - PRO-C review of Ecology's performance administering the RSMP,
  - New communication strategy,
  - Other ideas from our subgroups, and
  - Potential 2020 update of 2010 SWAMPPS Strategy.

We will provide feedback on a draft implementation plan for agricultural runoff monitoring at our following meeting in January.

The meeting schedule for 2016 is: January 13, March 16, June 1, September 14, and November 9.

## **ACRONYMS USED IN THIS MEETING SUMMARY:**

EAP – Ecology's Environmental Assessment Program  
IDDE – Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination  
LIO – Local Implementing Organization  
MEL – Manchester Environmental Laboratory  
NEP – National Estuary Program  
PRO-C or PRO-Committee – Pooled Resources Oversight Committee  
PSEMP – Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program  
PSP – Puget Sound Partnership  
QAPP – Quality Assurance Project Plan  
RSMP – Regional Stormwater Monitoring Program  
SIDIR – Source Identification Information Repository  
SOW – Scope of Work  
SWAMPPS – Stormwater Assessment and Monitoring Program for Puget Sound  
SWG – Stormwater Work Group  
USGS – U.S. Geological Survey  
WDFW – Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
WDNR – Washington Dept. of Natural Resources  
WSCC – Washington State Conservation Commission  
WSDOT – Washington Dept. of Transportation

## **ATTACHMENT:**

### **SWG EFFECTIVENESS STUDIES SUBGROUP'S RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR NEXT RSMP FUNDING ROUND**

- Establish clear criteria and explain the general framework for studies  
WHEN: Fall 2015
  - Include in orientation: Brief history of the group and previous process
- Similar solicitation and evaluation process, learning from 2014 experience  
WHEN: beginning of 2016
  - Project proponents submit a “letter of intent” emphasizing a crosswalk to permit implementation and how project will be useful to permittees
    - Initial review is followed by “match-making,” full proposal, and technical review
    - Panel to review applications; not every person reviews all applications
    - Identify project liaison: part of tech review (not only by Ecology – other peers)
      - ✧ Liaison may identify other technical reviewers
- Decision process would also be similar (Survey Monkey voting with one vote per permittee)  
WHEN: Late April or early May 2016
  - Only one workshop: lightning round, followed by poster session
  - Notify folks of survey in advance of workshop. Survey due one week following workshop